

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

*Please amend the claims as follows:*

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An image playback apparatus that reproduces an image in visible form based on input image data, said image playback apparatus executing a function for automatically changing a dynamic range of ~~at least a part~~ only a portion of the reproduced image that has been selected by an action of a viewer viewing the reproduced image.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An image playback apparatus that reproduces an image in visible form based on input image data, said image playback apparatus executing a function for automatically changing a tone conversion characteristic of ~~at least a part~~ only a portion of the reproduced image that has been selected by an action of a viewer viewing the reproduced image.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An image playback apparatus, comprising:

an image data input unit to which image data is input;

an image output device which reproduces an image in visible form based on image data received from the image data input unit;

an area specifying device which specifies a desired area from within an image reproduced by the image output device, wherein the desired area that has been selected by an action of a viewer viewing the reproduced image;

a tone conversion characteristic varying device which automatically changes a tone conversion characteristic of ~~at least a part~~ only a portion of the image containing the area specified by the area specifying device; and

an image processing device which creates the image to be reproduced by the image output device according to the tone conversion characteristic set by the tone conversion characteristic varying device.

4. (ORIGINAL) The image playback apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the image output device comprises at least one of a display device and a printer.

5. (ORIGINAL) The image playback apparatus according to claim 3, wherein:

the image output device comprises a display device; and

the area specifying device comprises a line-of-sight detection apparatus which detects a line-of-sight direction of the viewer looking at a screen of the display device.

6. (ORIGINAL) The image playback apparatus according to claim 3, wherein:

the image output device comprises a display device; and

the area specifying device comprises a touch panel provided on the display device.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of enhancing an image in visible form with an image playback apparatus, said method comprising:

reproducing an image in visible form based on input image data on an image output device; and

executing a function for automatically changing a dynamic range of at least a part only a portion of the reproduced image that has been selected by an action of a viewer viewing the reproduced image on the image output device.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 7, wherein the action of the viewer viewing the reproduced image is a manual input to a touch panel device.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 7, wherein the action of the viewer viewing the reproduced image is a movement of the viewer's eyes detected by a line-of-sight detection apparatus.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 8, wherein an area specifying device specifies a desired area from within the image reproduced by the image output device that has been selected by the action of the viewer viewing the reproduced image on the image output device.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 9, wherein an area specifying device specifies a desired area from within the image reproduced by the image output device that has been selected by the action of the viewer viewing the reproduced image on the image output device.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 11, wherein the line-of-sight detection apparatus detects a line-of-sight direction of the viewer looking at a screen of the output image device.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of enhancing an image in visible form with an image playback apparatus, said method comprising:

reproducing an image in visible form based on input image data on an image output device; and

executing a function for automatically changing a tone conversion characteristic of ~~at least a part~~ only a portion of the reproduced image that has been selected by an action of a viewer viewing the reproduced image on the image output device.

14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 13, wherein the action of the viewer viewing the reproduced image is a manual input to a touch panel device.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 13, wherein the action of the viewer viewing the reproduced image is a movement of the viewer's eyes detected by a line-of-sight detection apparatus.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 14, wherein an area specifying device specifies a desired area from within the image reproduced by the image output device that has been selected by the action of the viewer viewing the reproduced image on the image output device.

17. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 15, wherein an area specifying device specifies a desired area from within the image reproduced by the image output device that has been selected by the action of the viewer viewing the reproduced image on the image output device.

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 17, wherein the line-of-sight detection apparatus detects a line-of-sight direction of the viewer looking at a screen of the output image device.